

John- comments? corrections?
Thx! J.

January 12, 1996

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**MINGUS BIG BAND REPLACES AILING GERRY MULLIGAN
FOR "JAZZ ON THE CIRCLE" CONCERT**

Hot on the heels of sell-out concerts by Ahmad Jamal, "Jazz on the Circle" presents one of the finest big bands in the world, the Mingus Big Band, filling the opening created in the series by Gerry Mulligan's cancellation due to illness. This fourteen-piece ensemble, celebrating the challenging music of the late composer and bassist Charles Mingus, performs in the Cleveland Museum of Art's Gartner Auditorium on Friday evening, February 2, at 8 pm. Tickets prices are \$30, \$23, and \$18, with a \$2 discount for members of the museum, the Northeast Ohio Jazz Society, and WCPN-FM. Tickets are available through the Severance Hall Box Office at 231-1111.

According to the *New York Times*, the Mingus Big Band is "playing old and new arrangements that capture the best parts of the Mingus legacy: the muscle, the affection for history, the willingness to take chances, the guts and soulfulness." The band was formed by Mingus' widow, Sue Mingus, in September, 1991, following writer/composer Gunther Schuller's Lincoln Center production of the first-ever complete performance of Mingus' massive work for thirty-one instruments, "Epitaph"--a production repeated that year at Severance Hall as part of Tri-C JazzFest. Since then, in addition to its regular weekly sold-out performances on Thursday nights at Manhattan's Time Cafe, the Mingus Big Band has played on tour to enthusiastic audiences in the U.S., Japan, and Europe ("Pick of the Festival" at Glasgow in 1995), and recorded *Nostalgia in Times Square* (1993) and *Gunslinging Bird* (Manchester Guardian Jazz CD of the year for 1995).

Under the artistic direction of Ms. Mingus, the band is comprised of some of the finest musicians in the New York City area, including Mingus alums John Stubblefield, Randy Brecker, and Britt Woodman, as well as newcomers Chris Potter, Robin Eubanks, Kenny Drew, Jr., and Frank Lacy. The group's arrangements are by Mingus himself, Mingus alumni Jack Walrath and Ronnie Cuber, Gunther Schuller, Sy Johnson, or band member Steve Slagle. Their music has the hallmark of the best Mingus offered: highly adventurous, stylized, intellectually compelling.

(more...)

Charles Mingus, respected throughout his life as an extraordinary bass player who helped elevate the instrument to solo status, wrote large-scale works, but rarely was able to hear them performed as he would have wished. Mingus died in 1979 at the age of 56. In 1993, he became the first African-American composer to have his complete works acquired by the Library of Congress--an invaluable archive of recordings, tapes of composing sessions, scores, correspondence, and photographs. A Charles Mingus U.S. postage stamp was recently issued.

Four concerts remain in this inaugural "Jazz on the Circle" season. The next event is a Severance Hall performance by the TanaReid quintet on Friday, February 16, at 8 pm. The series returns to Gartner Auditorium on Saturday, March 16, at 8 pm, with the Tri-State All-Stars, brought together by Cleveland saxophonist Ernie Krivda and featuring Marion Hayden, Joshua Breakstone, Roger Humphries, and Tim Price.

"Jazz on the Circle" is a collaboration between the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Musical Arts Association, the Northeast Ohio Jazz Society, and Tri-C JazzFest. Major funding for the collaboration is being provided by the Kulas Foundation, the John P. Murphy Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, and the Cleveland Foundation. WCPN 90.3 FM, Cleveland Public Radio, is providing broadcast and promotional support. Major funding for the Northeast Ohio Jazz Society is provided by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest National Jazz Network (a program of the New England Foundation for the Arts in cooperation with Arts Midwest).

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